**The Mayans**

**Mayans had a complex civilization with cities, learning and a written language because**:

* Farmers were successful so people had more free time to learn new skills (like math and astronomy).
* Village leaders grew powerful because of taxes on trading chocolate, salt, obsidian, maize corn etc.
* They used this money to build armies and fight other cities and get tribute.

**Important features of Mayan society**.

* Mayans depended heavily on trade, did not have good roads, relied on sea trade routes.
* They grew corn, honey, salt, cotton, cocoa and other products to trade. Cocoa beans = money.
* Mayan women rose before dawn, lit a fire and prepared ground corn into tortillas for the

day’s meals. Women also cared for family’s animals like ducks and turkeys.

* Mayan fathers and sons ate their morning meal and went to work in the farm fields or hunted.

**Mayan government and social classes**

* Nobles and priests only knew how to read and write; wealthy farmers, served as scribes and oversaw government operations: gathered taxes and ordered construction of temple-pyramids.
* Mayan artisans made murals of Mayan life, battles, etc. and painted books to honor their gods.
* Commoners worked the land, growing corn, beans etc. Built temple pyramids and fought as soldiers.

**Mayan religion and ceremonial games**

* All their cities were built with religious temple-pyramids in the center. Mayans were polytheistic

(believed in many gods), most gods were in nature (like the rain or wind) and affected life.

* Priests performed human sacrifices and thought animal or human blood made their gods strong.
* The Mayans math allowed creation of two calendars: religious and daily life.
* Each day represented a god and the combination of this god and the day of the week were good or bad.
* The Mayans’ ball game called pok-a-tok: players tried to hit a solid rubber ball through a stone ring by using elbows, wrists and hips. Losing team sacrificed to the gods. All Mayans watched.

**Mayans declined because**: 1. Crop failures. 2. Rulers mistreated the commoners. 3. Constant war.

**Aztec Empire**

The Triple Alliance was the Aztec Empire. Three city-states made up the alliance: Tenochtitlan, the

most powerful, Texcoco and Tlacopan. This all grew up around Lake Texcoco in central Mexico.

**Key examples of urban planning at Tenochtitlan.**

* Tenochtitlan was one of the world’s largest cities, and built on an island in Lake Texcoco.

Separated from land by wooden bridges that were taken up at night.

* It was organized into districts and zones. Symmetrical grid pattern. It had two zoos and an aquarium.
* Very clean: Garbage collected twice a day. Trumpets sounded six times a day to signal time.
* In city center was a ceremonial plaza. Religious festivals and sacrifices on pyramids.

The nobles lived around this plaza. Four wide avenues were built to the Great Temple.

Three causeways and an aqueduct linked the island to the mainland.

**Triple Alliance religious beliefs and the role of human sacrifice**

* Aztecs were polytheistic but their two most important gods were the sun god and rain god. Each had a temple on top of the Templo Mayor pyramid in the center of Tenochtitlan. Enemy prisoners were sacrificed to the sun god to give him strength to rise each day.

**Describe economy and government of the Aztec Triple Alliance**

* The Aztecs had a large urban population to feed so trading food and products were essential.
* Triple Alliance kept good roads since everything had to be carried by hand from far away.
* The conquered people ran their own affairs but had to pay tribute to the Aztec leaders.
* Merchants sold items such as jade, feathers, gold, turquoise, animal skins, clothing, pottery, chocolate, vanilla, slaves. Cacao beans were used like money to buy and trade for products.
* City-states paid taxes in: food, cacao, gems, cotton, cloth animals, or even soldiers.

**Inca Empire**

* Inca Empire was the largest in the world stretching 3000 miles from present day Columbia to Chile.
* Inca capital city was Cuzco, high in the mountains of Chile.
* Developed a system of trading different goods from different regions called the vertical economy. From mountains: Llamas and alpacas for wool and meat. From hills: corn, potatoes and quinoa Fish from sea coast
* Small communities sprang up in these isolated areas which specialized in only a few things.
* The Inca Empire’s mix of closeness to the sea, hills and mountains made it possible to conquer more land, but mostly just a thin line down South America.

**Structure of the Inca government**

* An ayllu is an Incan clan ( group of related families), the basic unit of Incan society
* 1/3 of commoner products went to the Sapa Inca, 1/3 to the priests, 1/3 kept for selves.
* The mit’a system made commoners leave their ayllu and work on government farms, mines, or be soldiers. They made dams, cities & roads, were given food, but no pay.

**Inca religious beliefs**

* Polytheistic: god for the sun, female goddess for earth. Inca tried to keep gods happy with daily corn sacrifice, and regular llama sacrifice. In disaster and twice a year Chosen Women were sacrificed.
* Temple of the sun god in Cuzco. When Incan emperors died they were mummified and their

mummies brought out for religious ceremonies over the years.

**Andean cities and key examples of urban planning**

* Major paved roads ran in and out of the city. Incan cities were relatively small; most people lived outside of them and traveled to them for special occasions.
* City had central plaza surrounded by walls covered in gold; its floor was sand, raked daily by workers.
* High stone walls and temples built without mortar to keep the stones of the city’s buildings together.
* Cuzco means the belly-button of the world.

**European exploration before 1492**

Chinese explorers traveled around the Pacific Ocean. Egyptians, Greeks, Romans all made overland explorations. Vikings went to N. America around 1000 A.D. but were not ready to set up colonies. They were not in the right place at the right time to create huge New World empires.

**Factors that stimulated European exploration**

In 1400 Europe was backwards compared to other empires. China and the Islamic world had better technology, more wealth, and greater knowledge of the world. Three hundred years later the situation was reversed. Europeans were dominating the world and had the most knowledge. Europe’s “discovery” of gold and furs in New World led to power and learning in Europe

Economic reasons: Europeans wanted to pay less for spices and luxury items from Asia. Explorers headed east to get in the spice business: pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg covered up spoiled food taste.

Political reasons for exploration: For centuries, Muslims and Christians fought for control of Europe. In the 1400s, Europeans were winning. Portugal and Spain wanted to compete for trade and tax money.

Religion: To spread Christianity. New Tech.: Better mapmaking, guns, Mercator invented longitude and latitude, caravels, compasses, astrolabes, gunpowder.

**Major land and water routes of European explorers**

*Portuguese*: Henry the Navigator set up a school to teach sailors astrolabe and caravel use. Da Gama first to reach India, Cabral bumped into Brazil and claimed it for Portugual.

*Spanish explorers*: Columbus first to sail west, thought NW was Japan, began Spain’s empire. Magellan’s crew circumnavigated the globe (sailed around it). Cortes explored and conquered Mexico. Pizarro explored and conquered the Inca Empire in S. America.

Northern Europeans: Francis Drake sailed for England, second to circumnavigate globe and attacked Spanish colonies. John Cabot sailed for England, bumped into Canada, thought it was China. Hudson worked for Netherlands then England, explored Hudson River and Northwest Canada looking for Northwest Passage to Asia. Verranzzano sailed for France along N. America, bridge named after him.

**Africa, Europe and Native America in 1492**

-*Africa*, Political: Competing kingdoms with large armies (no guns or steel). Kings were “gods”. Most people live in villages with extended families (mom, dad, grandma, etc.). Economy was based on farming and herding animals. Trade routes used to sell slaves from enemy tribes to other Africans and also Europeans. Social: West Africans had no writing, and only simple math and science.

Religion: believed in spirits and made offerings and animal sacrifices to them.

*Europe*, Political: Almost constant war between many European countries. Each king tried to take land

Economic: Feudalism, kings want trade and taxes to get rich. Social: feudalism, metal weapons, learning

Religion: ONLY Christianity, believe human sacrifice is murder.

*New World*, Political: Mexico dominated by the Aztec Empire. Peru (Andes Mountain area) dominated by Incas. Both ruled with an iron hand (their people got mad at their rulers).

Economic: feudalism, but not as widespread. Incas used mit’a (public work). Sapa Inca owned everything

Social: Slavery and armies with stone and wooden weapons. **Aztec & Maya**: Have writing, science and math. **Incas**: No writing and little math and science. Religion: Polytheistic, much human sacrifice.

**Spanish dominance in the New World**

1. Spanish had better weapons (steel and gunpowder) 2. Spanish fought to kill, Natives fought to capture

3. Native people helped the Spanish defeat the Aztecs and Incas 4. **European diseases killed Indians**

**Columbus**

Columbus noted how easily the Indians and their gold could be conquered. Kidnapped a few Indians and brought them to Spain. Columbus was made governor of all lands in the Caribbean Ocean.

Encomienda System: Indians 14 and older had to fill bells with gold dust for the Spanish or be tortured: hands and noses cut off and left to die. Some mothers killed their own children or committed suicide. In the Caribbean, millions of people died. Taino civilization extinct, Spanish replaced with African slaves.

In favor of Columbus: 1. “Discovered” NW. 2. Tried to stop his men from hurting natives.

Against Columbus: 1. Columbus was responsible for mistreatment of Taino Indians. 2. Had little to do with US history. Both: Columbus is complex, neither good nor bad.

**The Conquering of the Caribbean, Aztecs and Inca Empires**

Columbus, Cortes and Pizarro all traded trinkets (bells, caps, etc.) for gold. Cortes and Pizarro were mistaken as gods and took the Indian emperors hostage for gold, then made alliances with unhappy Indian enemies to fight the ruling Indians.

**Pandemics and epidemics wiped out Native American populations**

An *epidemic* is a fast-spreading disease. A *pandemic* is a disease that spreads through one population.

Europeans carried small pox, measles and typhus with them to the New World which killed millions.   
Mexico: 25 million people before Europeans arrived. 100 years later there was less than 1 million.

**The Columbian Exchange**

*From New World*: potatoes, tomatoes, corn, turkeys, peanuts, chocolate, tobacco *From Europe:* apples, bananas, cows, chickens, pigs, sheep, sugar cane. Most important: potatoes and tobacco

**Design and motivation of Spanish colonial system**

European goals: get gold and spread Christianity. Europeans and creoles ruled (Europeans born in NW). Second, Mestizos (mixed European and Indian blood), third Indians. Last were African slaves, mulattos (African and Spanish) and zambos (African and Indian).

The Spanish conquistadors were required to read the requerimiento which told the Indians to follow the Catholic pope and Spanish king or they would be enslaved. In the Inca area the Spanish continued the mit’a (public work requirement) to make Indians work in mines or on Spanish haciendas (ranch or farm).

Conquistadors set themselves up like nobles and ruled the Indians harshly, not taking care of them.

**Portuguese colonial system**

Portugal moved slowly to conquer Brazil because they were already busy with the slave trade in Africa. Brazilian jungle made conquering Indians difficult. Portuguese sold Brazil wood and sugar from plantations in Brazil. Slavery was the foundation of Brazilian society Brazil had 15 captaincies (like states) run by soldiers; destroyed tribes who resisted them. Indians in Brazil were not used to long times of working for a government (unlike the Inca). Wealth mattered. Fazenda was large home and farmland.

**Impact of the Spanish expeditions to American southwest and Florida**

Spanish expeditions into present-day southwest USA and Florida: Ponce de Leon, governor of Puerto Rico explored Florida to find gold and the Fountain of Youth (water giving eternal life) where he died. Cabeza de Vaca shipwrecked in Florida and Texas, walked to Mexico telling of fabulous cities.

De Soto explored Florida to Mississippi. Coronado explored southwest in 1540.

**Beginning of European and African Slave Trade in the 1500s**.

At first, Portuguese sailors traded for slaves in the existing slave market in Africa. The Portuguese used slaves for intensive agriculture (farming) in the Azores and then in the sugar plantations of Brazil.

Soon all European colonies in the New World had slaves.

**The slave trade and the flow of people and goods between continents**

Triangular trade. Slaves from Africa to the New World. Raw materials(sugar, cotton, tobacco…) slaves produced from the New World to Europe. Finished goods from Europe back to Africa (guns, clothing)

**Effects of the slave trade**.

African leaders either did trade guns for slaves or refused; war between Africans to get slaves increased. Middle Passage was horrible journey of slaves on ships from Africa to New World, between 10 and 20% of slaves died shackled side by side in holds of slave ships.. Slaves worked in sugar, cotton or tobacco plantations, they were often sold apart from their families (50/50 chance). Slaves had no rights and their children were property of their owners; they wore leftover clothing. Some slave rebellions happened, but mostly just breaking tools or working slowly. Slaves relied on Christianity and music to endure.

**Impact of exploration, colonization and slave trade on the world**

Age of Exploration encouraged capitalism (business and owning property) and merchantilism (each country wants to sell products to others and keep gold). Massive immigration of Europeans to NW, ~90% of Native Americans died from European diseases, Africa lost 12 million people.